

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SECDEF FOR OASD (C3I)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, ETEL, MARR
SUBJECT: LAUNCH VEHICLE FOR NATO IV SATELLITE

1. THE EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY (ESA) HAS FORMALLY PROPOSED
THAT NICSMA CONSIDER USE OF THE ARIANE LAUNCH VEHICLE
FOR THE NATO 4 SATELLITES. THERE FOLLOW EXTRACTS FROM
AN AUGUST 16 LETTER TO THE DG NICSMA MAKING THIS PROPOSAL.

BEGIN QUOTE:

- IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES TOWARDS
THE NATO IV SATELLITE SYSTEM, I WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT
THE OBJECTIVES AND THE STATUS OF ESA'S ARIANE LAUNCH
VEHICLE PROGRAMME AND SUGGEST THAT PRELIMINARY STEPS
ARE TAKEN IN VIEW OF A POSSIBLE USE OF THIS LAUNCHER FOR
YOUR 4TH GENERATION SYSTEM.

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- ARIANE WILL BE LAUNCHED FROM THE ESA LAUNCH FACILITY
IN KOUROU, FRENCH GUIANA. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS
LAUNCHER IS ONE OF ESA'S PROGRAMMES. THE PROGRAMME
DECISION WAS TAKEN IN 1973 AND THE FOLLOWING ESA MEMBER
STATES PARTICIPATE: BELGIUM, DENMARK, FRANCE, GERMANY,
ITALY, NETHERLANDS, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, UNITED

KINGDOM.

(BREAK IN TEXT)

- AT THE TIME WHEN YOU ARE ESTABLISHING YOUR PROCUREMENT POLICY FOR NATO 4, I FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE OF MUTUAL INTEREST TO BASE THE NATO 4 SPACECRAFT SPECIFICATION ON THE COMPATIBILITY WITH BOTH ARIANE AND SHUTTLE.

END QUOTES.

2. IN HIS REPLY TO ESA, THE DG NICSMA STATED IN PART AS FOLLOWS.

QUOTE:

IT MIGHT WELL BE USEFUL FOR US TO HAVE SOME SORT OF PRESENTATION FROM YOU SOME TIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE, AND I WILL GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU AGAIN ABOUT THIS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE A VERY FULL PROGRAMME OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS AND IT IS THEREFORE NECESSARY FOR ME TO CHECK THE SITUATION CAREFULLY WITH MY STAFF. THIS I WILL DO AND I WILL WRITE AGAIN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

UNQUOTE.

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3. IN OUR VIEW, NATO'S USE OF THE ARIANE TO LAUNCH NATO IV SATELLITES CANNOT BE CONSIDERED AT ALL. ESA INCLUDES NATIONS WHICH ARE NOT NATO MEMBERS, AND THE LAUNCH SITE IS WELL OUTSIDE THE NATO AREA. THEREFORE, WE ARE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED THAT DG NICSMA, IN HIS RESPONSE, SEEMS TO LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE ESA PROPOSAL.

4. NICSMA HAS NOT YET TABLED THE ESA PROPOSAL BEFORE THE NATIONS, SO WE BELIEVE IT INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE US TO REGISTER ITS VIEWS OFFICIALLY AT THIS TIME. HOWEVER, APPROPRIATE US OFFICIALS MAY WISH TO RAISE THE QUESTION WITH THE DG NICSMA DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON, POINTING OUT THAT USE OF THE ARIANE WOULD VIOLATE SEVERAL NATO PRINCIPLES. BENNETT

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